

*THREE MEDITATIONS
ON THE EVE OF
NOVEMBER THE FOURTH*

BP
375
F35
970

*THREE MEDITATIONS
ON THE EVE OF
NOVEMBER THE FOURTH*

BY A. Q. FAIZI

**Theology Library
CLAREMONT
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
Claremont, CA**

© A. Q. FAIZI • 1970

SBN 900125 04 7

B. 91

LIBRARY REFERENCE 299.15 BAHÁ'Í

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
FLETCHER & SON LTD, NORWICH
PUBLISHED BY THE BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST
LONDON



Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Cause of God, referred to by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will and Testament as "the most wondrous, unique and priceless pearl that doth gleam from out the Twin surging seas" died on November 4th 1957 and these THREE MEDITATIONS ON THE EVE OF NOVEMBER THE FOURTH were those of Hand of the Cause of God Abul Qasim Faizi as he stood on the shores of the Straits of Magellan at Punta Arenas looking across to Tierra del Fuego, the Land of Fire, at the southern extremity of the South American continent.

Dearly beloved friends at home and pioneers abroad :

Dear companions of my heart, solace of my eyes and strength of my soul. When I am tired, sad and gloomy, I think of every one of you. At this hour as I stand at the window of my hotel room and gaze at the beautiful stretch of water called "The Straits of Magellan", I think of you; thousands, nay millions, of waves like unto white feathered pigeons, emerge from the invisible horizons and approach the shores, I take them as messages of love and prayers which have taken wings throughout eternity.

Today as I was gazing at this picturesque work of nature, my memory turned to what I had read years ago about the discovery of this ocean path. Suddenly it seemed that an unseen hand tore asunder the veils which covered the past centuries, and a glorious vista stretched in front of me—the year 1520.

It was in this year that Magellan, despondent of procuring the means for an expedition in his own country, left Portugal for Spain. He had one fixed idea and of that

he was so sure that he pleaded with all his vigour and power for the royal sanction and promise of financial support.

"I shall find the 'paso', " he roared in the Spanish court. "I alone know where to find it."

Months passed before he was on his ship leading four others with no less than the magic number of 260 sailors under his command.

It was one of the most arduous tasks that could be undertaken in those years, when no means of comfort and no wholesome provisions were available. It was an act of faith, vision and audacity. Nothing could be foreseen and no measure could ever be premeditated. Yet they sailed on.

Inhospitable climates, the wrath of nature in the form of tempests and gales, snow and hail, met them wherever they dared seek harbour.

Notwithstanding the incalculable disasters such as had rarely been inflicted upon any adventurer, or the schemes fraught with fear, consternation and threat, he, the captain of his fleet and the master of his soul, with indomitable courage and supreme

audacity always kept on sailing and commanding "To the South!".

Officers became dubious and reluctant and influenced the sailors. The fleet was menaced by mutinous leaders and malcontented men. Everything forebode disastrous consequences—gloomy days one after the other dawned upon him and each augured hours of repining and rebelling. But the captain never flinched, never doubted, mastered every situation and held the realms of affairs in his iron grip. HE KEPT ON SAILING "To the South", NEVER did he reverse course.

It is the law of God and ocean that the disloyal ones should be punished lest their perfidious acts of unfaithfulness contaminate the whole atmosphere of hope and peace. Without such divine discipline no boat can ever cross even a small lake.

High-ranking officers, like stars in the firmament of command, were cast down and sailors were marooned. Slow and painful death and the loss of every trace to posterity, became the disgraceful fate of those who rebelled against the onward voyage of the ships to their destined goal.

One year passed. The last days were the gloomiest. One ship was lost. Stores and provisions dwindled. The coastal inlets they penetrated proved to be buoys of false hopes.

Fear of the unknown and uncharted south seas, fear of starvation and death, overtook everyone.

What moments of paradoxical visions;
What grave times to take great decisions;
What a struggle within and without!

He started the expedition with clear
vision,
Had faith in what he saw,
Was brimful with zeal and enthusiasm,
Braved all dangers,
Weathered all storms,
Suppressed mutiny
Created discipline and order and
Travelled thousands of miles.

But now he was all alone in his cabin and
did not know that
He was at the threshold of final victory,
Had little more time to go,

Two more degrees of latitude to cover,
Two hundred more miles to travel and
then
To discover "The Paso".

He peered with his keen sight to the dark horizon and could discern nothing but darkness—darkness and nothing more.

He sighed and whispered that nothing was discovered, nothing was achieved, his quest ill-fated, without the slightest hope of any future resumption, the work of all his yesterdays at the brink of ruin and destruction.

Had he been a man with less vision and faith, he would have followed the path of least resistance, yielded to the counsels of his companions and returned home.

At this juncture, however, when his fate and everlasting glory were hanging by a thread, he closed his ears to the repeated clamours and claims of men and patiently assessed the situation. Then, suddenly emerging from the depths of despair, free from the pangs of doubt and clutches of dismay, once more his command rang out: "To the South".

In the last act of this great drama we see nothing but mute mountains, standing in eternal solitude, clad in the white robe of snow; desolate landscapes where no sign of living man could be detected. No enchanting music could be heard from far off shores, nothing except the howling of wind and the roaring of storms.

The disquieted, impatient voices raised again and again in restlessness never encroached upon the brave heart of that iron-willed man who had his goal clearly set in front of him.

Cruel nature never desires to open the veils and reveal the mysteries of its realm to Man. When the four remaining boats entered the labyrinth of endless twists and turns that was the passage, a tempest of unprecedented vigour and strength descended upon them. The hopes of the crews were shattered, but the faith of the captain remained unshaken and out of the darkness which covered all horizons and all hearts, heedless of the lightning and thunder, his voice echoed, "Sail on, sail on, we are on the right 'Paso'—go on—steer on—on—on!"

From the window of my hotel room, at this hour of the night I can visualize those days of more than four centuries ago, when no one lived on these shores. The fumes and flames of the Land of Fire and the threat of the gigantic Patagonians were left behind on the far off horizons.

Now the waves of the new ocean slowly surged to embrace for the first time the messengers of the old world—the ships were gliding in the silent path and opening a way—a new way—that dreamt-of “PASO” from one ocean to another. How immense must have been the relief and rejoicing which came to them, “Tired but blissful” they reached their goal and for the first time the globe was circumnavigated.

What a great contrast is this to the position of the Bahá'ís in their fate-filled hours.

We have passed through many years of turmoil, toil and travail—a vow unprecedented in the history of mankind was taken by all the friends, never to retreat until all goals are won.

Hundreds and hundreds of our brave pioneers, men, women, young and old, children of all ages, left their homes and

sailed their boats towards goals clearly set for them in the divine plans.

But we have still more distance to cover ; the Ark will pass from one ocean to another and we will enter a new era in the history of our Faith ! How very grateful every one of our dear and precious pioneers should feel that they remained firm and staunch, never flinched, never doubted and never turned their faces from their guiding star. How proud, extremely proud all of us should feel that the Bahá'í Community throughout the world has produced such great and brave souls, in such a bitter period of history and in such a short space of time.

They heard harsh and unjust criticisms, experienced humiliation, scornful laughter and derision, underwent indescribable hardships, suffered premature deaths, sold their possessions and properties, spent their lifetime's savings, lost their children and relatives, entered into unknown lands and islands, crossed stormy seas and tempestuous oceans, climbed hills and mountains, penetrated the depths of deserts and forests, laboured in the most cruel and inhospitable

climates, and settled amongst suspicious people, but nothing could ever shake their faith and determination. We are sure that in the future, too, they will remain undaunted and unshaken.

Bravos! Thousands of bravos and cheers for the Knights and Heroes of BAHÁ'-U'LLÁH who are scattered throughout the globe!

In the dark nights of despondent sorrows and dismay, let us rise in thought above the earth and penetrate with our own eyes the darkness of irreligion which has enveloped the whole earth; let us gaze on the summits of mountains; into the hearts of deserts and woods; into the cottages of Africa; the huts of India; the Isles of all the seas and oceans and behold the most beautiful spectacle ever arranged by the hands of the Almighty. We see dazzling lights of heavenly beauty as if gems of unimaginable splendour are strewn about the earth. They are the burning souls and hearts of our beloved pioneers who are lamps of guidance, fires of love, torches of divine knowledge, and clear crystal springs of the water of life to bewildered mankind.

Even if the people are not thirsty they proffer the cup, for they are sure that the day will come when even the seven seas will not suffice to slake their thirsts.

No moth is to be seen near them although they burn brightly, yet they are certain that the time will come when thousands will cluster around them or their memories.

Thousands of praises to our dear pioneers who found "PASOS"—NEW "PASOS"—to the hearts of the people who for many, many centuries had been left in the catacombs of misery and oblivion; people who had never been approached and spoken to as members of Man's family, or as children of the One God, Who is the Father of all.

Our pioneers went to them, to their houses, farms, cottages, huts and shelters; embraced them and made them understand and believe that they are also the leaves of one branch and the fruits of one tree, thus adding to the links of love which, like a gold chain, is girdling the globe in the Name of BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

Those men of four centuries ago sailed the pathless oceans full of fears and doubts, but we sail the oceans of sacrifice and

service which are clearly charted by His mighty, powerful and inspired pen, with hearts full of hope that the final victory will be for the Cause of God.

Look at the map of the divine plan where many circles are drawn. In His own powerful description, the circles are the wheels of Bahá'u'lláh's chariot. Let us walk beside His chariot when it passes from one era of victory to another era of greater victories. Let us walk with it when it passes through many rainbow arches of triumphs and enters into wider and wider horizons of many stars, and multifarious spectacles of majesty; let us remain with it and be rewarded by our nearness to the hem of His mercy and be intoxicated by the melodious music of the ever-rolling wheels of Bahá'u'lláh's chariot throughout eternity.

Let us remember that when sacks of wheat, barley and other grains were discovered in the tombs of ancient kings, many thought that such grains which had remained for centuries under the earth, had lost the vitality of growth. But when they planted them, they grew. The same thing is true of the people who have been

pushed to the mountain fastnesses, to the depths of forests and to the remote islands. They have not lost their vitality. They are alive. They have that potentiality of growth. Now the mighty hands of God are plunging into these forlorn and forsaken continents and are planting these souls into the fertile soil of the divine garden, and thus they will grow.

I am returning from a visit to your brothers and sisters—the pioneers of BAHÁ'U'LLÁH. I met them in their houses, their fields of service, in cities, villages and mountains. I saw them get ready to dash forward to deserts and woods, carrying the water of life for the thirsty souls scattered in the obscure corners of the world. I watched them passing through lanes, streets and densely-populated areas of their towns, giving to the people roses of love fresh from the gardens of their hearts.

Theirs is not the fate of heroes and knights who are little known, recognized or appreciated in their own days; their brothers and sisters at home know them and praise them, although the people around them may look at them with

suspicious eyes and sometimes, with scornful whisper or in raging anger, tell them, "Go back home". There are people also who, sometimes in mournful tones and sometimes in imperious manner, warn them of calamities and disasters which are looming near and then ask them again, "Why are you still here?"

But at all times I found the pioneers like beacons built on solid rocks amidst the tempestuous seas. The waves attack them cruelly but only wash off the dirt and the lamp remains shining more brightly than ever before.

How can I forget them, and how can I ever describe to you the way they tread the stony path of sacrifice? Think of a meagre, slim maid-servant of Bahá'u'lláh who, single-handed and alone, goes to the valleys and villages and with a heart brimful with love for mankind, puts her hands on the foreheads of sick children, caresses their mothers and speaks some consoling words to the fathers and relatives. She takes rays of sunshine with her into the abyss of misery.

"Love's labour" is the label of the work

of the other dear soul who, in the midst of teaching activities, patiently and persistently makes beautiful little picture books with some lines of explanation; and when the little children recited their Bahá'í lessons, and I asked them how they learned these beautiful things—they showed me their books, which were made by this devoted pioneer.

My heart leaps up when I think of that family who always have groups of Indians in their house. They talk to them, teach them, entertain them and share with them their own daily bread. In these great services father, mother and four children participate.

It was in a village that I found a mother with her only child. The mother works every possible hour to earn enough to support herself and her daughter. Both keep the fire burning in the fireside where many come to hear about our beloved Faith.

Think of two families united by the bonds of marriage but scattered all through the world in the Name of BAHÁ'U'LLÁH and each one an example of self-sacrifice and devotion.

I knew an Armenian family in Iran. Father, mother and small son embraced the Cause and started to serve it in a manner that amazed everyone. As it proved somewhat difficult to teach the Armenians in Iran and Turkey, I asked the father of this family, "How did you become a Bahá'í?" In answer to this question he taught me a beautiful lesson. He said, "Have you ever seen a cobbler's shop? In the evening the floor of the shop is nothing but a heap of rubbish. The cobbler takes a magnet in his hand and moves it in the heap. All the clean, useful and shining nails jump to the magnet. The cobbler stores the nails and throws away the rubbish. The same is true with the Word of God. It is held up between heaven and earth and all who have the required intrinsic qualities are attracted to it. Now we are three Armenian nails." How very true! They are as firm and steadfast as nails and are now working with many other pioneers in South America.

I cover my face because of my shortcomings in the service of the Cause when I contemplate the services of the dearly-beloved Mother of South America, who for

more than forty years did everything in her power for the propagation of the Cause, forged ahead in spite of all the insurmountable obstacles and now with bent back and grey hair sees glorious edifices all around her in honour of the Faith she loves so sincerely and so devotedly.

Dearest friends, I am certain you are all praying for your precious pioneers and know they are always in your hearts. Let us more closely than ever before follow the example of the Master who said that a king may attend the council of his ministers, summon his courtiers to his presence, order banquets and spread sumptuous tables, but at all times his mind and heart are turned towards the soldiers who are guarding or fighting in the far-flung frontiers of the country. He said that the same is true of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He always thinks of the teachers and pioneers. He expects to receive the news of their victories, to send them what they need and convey to them messages of love, assurance and encouragement.

This is not a story of ages gone by. It is a humble tribute to the pioneers and a poor

description of the almost inexplicable conditions under which many of the new members of our world-wide Bahá'í family are living.

This plaintive voice comes to you from the depths of human misery. I could not believe my eyes when for the first time a group of the indigenous believers emerged from their cottages with their arms open to greet and embrace me. Their clothes had been made many years ago from a piece of sackcloth, and I saw men and women wearing many-coloured patches held together to cover their dear bodies. Their hair was unkempt and dirty, their hands covered in layers of dust. Their legs changed into solid things after years of walking almost barefoot on the sharp, stony paths of the mountainsides. I consoled myself by thinking that only in that locality were believers the victims of so much poverty but afterwards, wherever I went, I found them under exactly the same burden, destitute and in the same deplorable, degraded plight.

But of their manners, politeness, purity of heart, strength of soul and their quick

receptivity to the light of the New Day and comprehension of fundamental verities of this World Faith, I have many stories to tell.

It is clear that they are the remnants of a race once grand and glorious, civilized and cultured. All their material wealth had been taken from them by force, evil plots and atrocities. No way was left for them except to find shelter in the remote fastnesses of wild mountains as far as possible from the cunning hands of men from other parts of the world.

Their imperial pride and grandeur can still be easily discerned in their countenances, their large, black, penetrating eyes and their graceful demeanour. They are very calm and reserved. They discuss for hours, but in a calm and quiet atmosphere. Never did they hurry for food, tea or anything else, no matter how late they were served or how hungry they were. They never hastened to have their share first but sat patiently until such time as the plates were served. No one expressed the desire for one more plate; even the children did not cry for more.

One of the most shining memories of my visit is the night when we had a large meeting. The only light we had was from two or three candles. The impression of the profiles of these men and women went deep into my heart. To me they were newly-enrolled soldiers of BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S Army of Life, ready to accept discipline before entering the arena of service and taking charge of affairs.

A question was asked: "What did you like the most in the Bahá'í teachings?" The following answers were given:

"Equality of the rights of men and women.

Universal education.

Prohibition of liquor," etc.

To hear these words from the lips of these people who have been pushed aside from the circle of the human family for centuries and in these very remote mountains of the world, took me back to the dark days of the desolate prison room of BAHÁ'U'LLÁH in 'Akká. And in that minute of ecstasy His words echoed in my

mind. When in prison He said that He accepted the chains on His neck so that all chains would be broken into pieces and Man would become free. He accepted prison confinement so that Man will have liberty. He accepted to live in the most ruined city of the world so the ruined citadels of hearts would be repaired and made firm.

The chains are giving way day by day and we hear the resounding note of every link as they fall. Here I could behold the shimmering light of new life from the windows of the newly-fortified citadels of the hearts of these dear and precious souls. In that darkness no one could see the pearls of tears shed at their feet.

Nothing will ever be prettier to me, hereafter than this:

Bahá'í women walk along with their men for hours or even days to attend a meeting. When they entered the meeting, they would open their arms and embrace me. I would see a bundle carried on their shoulders and in that bundle a little heavenly gift—a child its two beautiful

large black eyes gazing at me. They were the loveliest things that my eyes could behold. To me they were two sources of light—two windows through which one could peep into heavens of beauty and charm. They welcomed me with their innocent looks. By the slightest touch of a finger tip, their beautiful lips would open into smiles. How easily they are appeased—glimpses of light shone from the faces of the mother and child to make one understand that no stranger had ever touched their children before. Oh, how I loved them—adored them—picked them up, hugged and kissed them! But to see them in such depths of hunger, nakedness and misery is beyond human endurance.

We are rightly happy and proudly claim and proclaim—"We love you and we embrace you!" But is this sufficient? When did embraces and kind words satisfy the hunger of the body and soul, satiate the thirst of hearts and clothe the dying naked ones in the blizzards of the terrible cold seasons?

They are our brothers and sisters, fragments of human families, which have been cast away by the hands of cruelty, covetousness and atrocity. They are our relatives who would have remained lost to us had it not been for the bounties of BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, who gathered them and placed them on our laps and told us that they are His trust.

What do we expect from people who have been utterly deprived even of the most rudimentary means of livelihood? What can they do if their provision consists of only wheat, corn and potatoes? A loaf of good bread is a prize to them, and a handful of sugar is considered a valuable gift. Their children die amidst plenty, there is no one to spend lavishly for their birthdays and death to them is a relief. Men and women are so delicate and tender that the slightest touch of a disease takes them to their graves—I hardly ever saw any old women or old men amongst them.

Now that they have come to the tabernacle of love and unity, they consider it as the last haven and heaven for themselves. Should we fail to keep them, they will lose all hope and nothing will remain for them

but to fall again to the lowest depths of deprivation.

They need everything, even the crumbs that we carelessly throw away can feed their hungry infants. Schools, centres, teachers and regular supervision are needed to keep them happy and hopeful.

What can you my dear pioneers do? What can we do if we do not truly realize in what period of man's history we are living? If love is not translated in these days into tremendous sacrifices, it will remain unproductive forever. These are fleeting hours. Every minute and second is valuable. No sacrifice will be too great in the spiritualization of this planet.

Rest assured, beloved pioneers, that your brothers and sisters at home and throughout the world will not leave you forsaken. Streams of help will be flowing into the proper administrative channels. In these God-granted opportunities, be sure that the friends will give all that they have for the redemption of mankind and the spiritualization of the globe.

Rest assured that your friends will never abandon you. CARRY ON and invite

thousands and thousands to the banquet of BAHÁ'U'LLÁH and give them their share of the Bread of Life. Climb higher and higher on the ladder of success and awaken the people from their long spiritual lethargy. MARCH ON to the loftiest summits of victory and be certain that all your sacrifices and endeavours will bear splendid fruits, and the deprived members of the human family will emerge out of obscurity and will find their abode in the warm sunshine of universal love.

Pray that the hungry cries of the newly-born babes in the Kingdom of God and the plaintive voices of the many recent settlers in the tabernacle of BAHÁ'U'LLÁH will reach thousands of souls and stir thousands of hearts in these opportune hours which, if lost, will remain irretrievable throughout eternity.

* * *

The hours of loneliness weigh heavily upon this humble traveller who finds "The path too long and the cross too heavy". No wonder then if people see me strolling on the shores of this Strait, watching sunrises and sunsets and listening to the secrets that the ripples whisper in my ears.

When it dawned upon me that here—in this water path—two boundless oceans meet and mingle, I found myself spell-bound by its glorious fate and function and it seemed to me then a bountiful and salubrious fountain of crystalline, fresh water, full of captivating beauty and charm. Often its ripples washed away the soils of sorrow from my aching heart and its waves dispelled the chains of melancholy from my waking soul.

Today I did not find solace in this solitude. The thin veil of dusk through which the ruby of Mercury and the sapphire of Neptune were dimly discernible, fell solemnly upon all things. In the midst of my prayers and pleas I could hear the waves whisper again and again :

“Come Come
No voyager can pass
But needs must hear my song.
Then on he sails, o’erwhelmed with joy,
With the knowledge of things unknown
before.”

The waves are no longer white-feathered pigeons conveying messages of love and prayers, but free and fearless giants who, heedless of “mountains heaved to heavens scraping the edges of the skies”, whip the sharp, stony shores and retreat only to return and combat more ferociously than before. They are mountainous, reckless monsters above and beyond the power of law and order, ruthlessly rocked by gales, ever rolling, ever rearing—the noise of their thundering echoes on all sides.

The forest-shaded eastern shores are embellished with such verdure as to seem covered by tapestries of many tinted turquoise while horizons to the west are enveloped in mists of crimson hue.

The ever-moving lantern of the heavens is gracefully gliding downward from the azure dome and in its downward march

bestows a drop of the lover's blood upon each wave and proudly looks beneath and finds thousands, nay millions of its own reflections in the scarlet velvet of the ever-surging seas. Rather be drowned amongst the mountainous waves than taste the bitterness of the approaching mysterious night, like unto a fast-fading flame sinking deep into the infinite seas of solitude, thus putting its crimson seal on the death warrant of a day. Then when the red-rimmed scroll of the night was opened and unfurled, lids were taken off the inexhaustible treasures of the universe and myriads of diamonds and pearls were poured into the deep blue bowl of heaven; and the moon—floating like a dream—poured its mysterious blue lustre on these sparkling jewels.

The reflection of the moon formed a magic transparent silvered path beneath which the waves were seen, not yet subsided but still in constant commotion and fret, bathing all shores in showers of white foam.

The noises of the tumultuous town were gradually hushed. The exhausted fisherman, enfeebled by age, weary and bent by years of tireless toil, his head sunk into the collar

of his threadbare coat, and his feet bleeding on the sharp rocky shores of the ever surging sea, is heading home to his mournful sleep. Plaintive songs of fast-flying sea birds echo the lamentation and groans of another day rolled into the abyss of time dead and doomed to eternal loss.

Oh sea, ever moving, ever surging! Pluck some gleaming pearls from the yet unseen fathoms and bestow them as souvenirs upon your homeless and humble companion. Tell him tales of terror and trouble, even if his blood runs cold. This is his last request while he still feels free and bold.

How can seas of emotion be poured into chalices of words, though they be of gold? Unlimited in their scope to contain, they are powerless in their capacities to convey.

* * *

But look around:

Are not these ravishing spectacles of
majesty and might,

Immensity and height,

But a token of the two eternal oceans
of spiritual lineage of that "Most
wondrous, unique and priceless pearl
that doth gleam from out the twin
surging seas"?

Are not the vast horizons hued and framed
in green and red, signs of the most
cherished memories that he had of his
Beloved, "The Exalted One"?

Was it not through the lustre of this
pearl that heroes and conquerors were
made out of the commonest clay? Did not
his words well up from the depths of his
loving heart and pierce all hearts deep in
the core, so that out of swamps of heedless-
ness, pioneers and knights were born?

Through the magic of his clarion-call, the
spells of lethargy were broken and the
dreamless dust became heaven-lit with the
sweetest dreams, the realization of each one
becoming the water of life to many a
thirsty soul.

His love will shield generations from fear and will increasingly and permanently cause many legions of steadfast and stalwart knights to spring free from the snares and pursuit of material comfort to the arenas of honourable death or resplendent victory.

Through the ingenious application of his loving advice, the abandoned and distressed, the forlorn and forsaken, will find shelter in the sunshine of God's Universal Love.

We all remember the last melody he sang—it echoed the onward march of the intrepid soldiers of the Army of Life, whom we all watched while our eyes brimmed with tears of joy.

He invited mankind to many sumptuous joyful banquets, spread in the Name of their Redeemer, but alas! whoever suspected that at the zenith of his plan, the midway point of his crusade, there would creep a dark and dreary shadow which would break all cords, shatter all the golden bridges of hope, lay the harps broken and bruised at the feet of the guests and alter all the music meant for mirth and merriment into sobbing, buried in the bosom of long and lonesome nights of desperate separation?

Tortured to the quick by the speedy flight of the most precious hours of Man's life the weary traveller uttered words to the night as if in delirium:

Oh Night!

Where is the depth of man's signorance?

Where is the abyss of his downfall?

Oh Night! Deep, mysterious night!

Reveal stories of the fateful hours which took wing from out your bosom. Grant them as gifts to this homeless and humble voyager.

Like unto ancient troubadours tell him some tales of old, even if his blood run cold. He ventures to request while he still feels free and bold.

The night mourned and groaned like unto a mortally-wounded bird:

Hold up your goblet—I see it brimming with tears. Receive this drop from the depths of the wild darkness of the past and then yours will be a nectar hitherto unheard and untasted.

It was at a time when Man, the essence of negligence and pride, started sending

satellites to probe into the silent realms
above while

His heaven and haven
His beloved and benevolent
true and sincere brother
was lying in bed unrecognized
and unsought for.

Yes, this is the sad story of bewildered
humanity.

"It was during that summer when man,
victim to the ruthless scourging of his
never-ending animal lusts and desires
became enchanted, nay bewitched, by the
song which he sang all the summer long.
Consumed in the fire and flame of his wild
pursuit of passion and shame heedlessly he
went on.

"Thousands and thousands were hurled
into their graves, but nothing could stop
time from rolling on towards that gloomy
dawn. Even if all would kneel and beg the
Lord to accept them as sacrifices, that por-
tentous moment could not be advanced
or delayed. Seven seas of the blood of
martyrs could not wash away the dust of
despondency accumulated upon the

illustrious pearl of the two divine oceans!

“Yes, in that ominous hour came to pass that which dimmed all souls and devastated the rose garden of all hearts. Ever since then the tongues never stop uttering ‘Beloved’, and souls burn in the fire of longing to touch the hem of his attire, or to have one—only one—glimpse of his heavenly countenance.

‘What heart can remain sterile rock,
unmoved and untouched at this hour?

‘What soul has no zest and fervour and is
not deeply moved at this moment?

‘When

‘The most wondrous, unique and
priceless pearl that doth gleam from
out the twin surging seas’,

was quietly taken back to its eternal
abode in the celestial treasure houses of
of the Lord”.

*

*

*

Faizi

1914

